Theodore M. Greene

Religious Perspectives of College Teaching in Philosophy

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In Philosophy

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Theodore M. Greene

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PREFACE TO THE SERIES OF ESSAYS

Three years ago Professor George F. Thomas of Princeton University, in a letter to The Edward W. Hazen Foundation, urged the need for careful studies by natural scientists, social scientists, and humanistic scholars concerning the religious issues, implications and responsibilities involved in the teaching of their respective disciplines. This pamphlet is part of a series instituted by The Edward W. Hazen Foundation for the purpose of carrying Professor Thomas' suggestion into the sphere of fruitful inquiry and discussion. Under the sponsorship of The Foundation, the undersigned committee has enlisted the aid of distinguished scholars deeply interested in the relations between religion and higher education. Each of these scholars will discuss the problem in its specific pertinence to his own field of learning, his own conception of his intellectual and spiritual responsibilities to his students, to the institution which he serves, and to society in general. He will address himself primarily to fellow-teachers in his field, secondarily to students and to interested members of the educated public.

The committee responsible for the survey wishes to steer a course between two opposite dangers: that of a theological vagueness which would produce nothing but noncommital generalities, and that of a dogmatism which would alienate all but a small number of readers. The views of the authors of these essays may vary from liberal to orthodox interpretations of religion. Throughout this diversity, however, runs a common denominator which is shared by the authors and by the members of the committee. Religion is not nature-worship, or man-worship, or science-worship. It is not the totality of human value. Although it is metaphysical, ethical, and humanitarian, it cannot be equated with metaphysics, or ethics, or humanitarianism. Religion is man's quest for communion with an ultimate spiritual reality completely independent of human desires and imaginings. Religion apprehends this Absolute Reality and Value in faith, and seeks to give concrete embodiment to the ineffable in creed, cult, and conduct. The creative power of the universe is not an intellectual abstraction but an objective entity, a Divine Being. Although God infinitely transcends our human nature and understanding, He most potently reveals Himself to those who conceive of Him in personal terms. Thus symbolized, He becomes

for us not merely Cosmic Mind, but Creator, Judge and Redeemer of mankind.

Within this broad but positive consensus the authors of these essays will exercise complete freedom in expressing their personal views. As regards the relevance of religion for higher education there is also general agreement among those associated with this survey. The cleavage which divides intellectual from spiritual life is probably the most ominous defect of modern civilization. "High religion and intellectual enterprise belong together," says Professor Robert L. Calhoun. "Each gains from close association with the other. The two in conjunction, but neither one by itself, can move with hope toward more effective conquest of the chaos that again and again threatens to engulf human living. That way lies whatever chance we may have for a more humane world."

In his essay *Colleges, Faculties and Religion,* appraising consultations with more than fifty faculties, Professor Albert C. Outler reports that "Education is by way of being reformed with little or no regard for the possible contribution of religion to its reformation. For a very tangled skein of reasons, it has come to pass that, in the name of tolerance and the democratic spirit, American educators (whatever their private beliefs and convictions) have in fact suppressed the consideration of the problems of the religious interpretation of reality and human existence in the educational process." He sees, however, evidence that religion will become increasingly influential in American higher education if it can receive "a fair hearing in the open forum of American academic discussion . . . . Where this is done, there is usually a vigorous and generally favorable reaction from both faculty and students."

To obtain such a "fair hearing" from a large academic audience is the purpose of these essays. Even in these days of "general education," however, the modern scholar remains a specialist. He is likely to be less interested in the general problem of the place of religion in higher education than in the specific problem of how religion pertains to the teaching of his particular subject. This more specialized aspect of the question deserves more careful investigation than it has hitherto received. At present, therefore, these essays are being published as separate pamphlets so that each may appeal directly to those concerned with the discipline which it discusses.

It is hoped, however, that the project may prove fruitful enough to justify later publication in a single volume or perhaps in three shorter books devoted respectively to the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities.

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RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES IN PHILOSOPHY

THEODORE M. GREENE

I. THE PROBLEM

What are the "religious issues, implications, and responsibilities involved in the teaching of philosophy"? This is a highly controversial question today and one to which very different answers are being given by able philosophers and by responsible religious leaders.

Many contemporary philosophers, among them some of the most influential here in America and abroad, are convinced that all religious beliefs lack objective validity and that it is therefore one of the major tasks of philosophy to unmask religious pretension, discredit faith in any kind of a Deity, and develop a purely secular philosophy in which religion, at least in any of its traditional forms, has no place. This, they would say, is the intellectual responsibility of the honest and competent philosopher to his students, his institution, and his society.

A good many contemporary theologians entertain a suspicion of philosophy as profound as is the sceptical philosopher's suspicion of religion. This arises in some cases from their conception of God as a Being who is so mysterious that human reason is wholly incapable of apprehending Him; in other cases, from the conviction that reason is radically perverted and perverse unless it is made absolutely subservient to religious faith; and, very frequently, from the belief that the Truth has been proclaimed to man by God with such authority and finality, whether through an authoritative Church or a verbally inerrant Bible, that reason's only function is to accept and elucidate what is already indubitably known to the devout believer. Any one of these conceptions suffices to arouse profound suspicion of, if not open hostility to, any philosophical inquiry which accepts the general reliability of human reason and the right of philosophy to examine critically all beliefs, even those hallowed by ecclesiastical authority and endorsed by an intense religious faith. Such critical inquiry is branded as "pagan rationalism" against which the orthodox believer must be protected at all costs.

It is unlikely that what I have to say will be congenial or convincing to the dogmatically anti-religious philosopher or the dogmatically anti-rational believer. I must address myself to those

who are at least willing to consider open-mindedly Professor Calhoun's assertion, quoted in the *Preface:* "High religion and intellectual enterprise belong together. Each gains from close association with the other. The two in conjunction, but neither one by itself, can move with hope toward more effective conquest of the chaos that again and again threatens to engulf human living." I shall attempt to show that a "liberal" Christianity and an equally "liberal" philosophy do, in fact, imply one another and are essential to the survival of a "liberal" cultural tradition. Let us start by examining the nature of philosophy at its best.

II. The Nature of Philosophical Inquiry

There are certain characteristics of the philosophical enterprise which all philosophers, of whatever persuasion, would agree are crucial, though they would not all formulate them in exactly the same way. These characteristics can conveniently be described in terms of a distinctly philosophical attitude, scope, orientation, and method.

(1) The *attitude* characteristic of a philosopher is one of radical inquiry into all human beliefs, however self-evident they may seem or however sanctified by secular or religious authority. It is the privilege and the duty of philosophy to analyze all experience and its data without predetermined conclusions. This critical temper extends itself to an examination of all institutions and their mores, to all social conventions and cultural heritages, and to the presuppositions, procedures and conclusions of all the other disciplines, including experimental science, historical research, the social studies, the criticism of literature and the fine arts, and the theological formulations of religious faith. It is also directed to the philosophical enterprise itself—to its own presuppositions, its own ways of knowing, and the reliability of its own conclusions. All philosophers would agree that to be credulous, uncritical and dogmatic on *any* issues is, by definition, to be unphilosophical.

(2) Philosophy can also be distinguished from the other disciplines by its *scope.* Its scope is all-embracing; its field of inquiry includes the whole of reality knowable to man and the sum-total of human experience. The other disciplines are, by comparison, limited in scope both "horizontally" and "vertically"—horizontally,

in the sense that each focuses upon certain aspects of reality and certain types of experience to the exclusion of others; vertically in the sense that these disciplines do not normally examine their own basic presuppositions. Thus, physics restricts itelf to a certain type of experimental exploration of the physical structure and behavior of the spatio-temporal world, ignoring, as irrelevant to its particular enterprise, the distinguishing characteristics of living organisms, of man as a moral agent, of works of art, and of the God of religious worship. Similar self-imposed restrictions characterize all other specialized inquiries. Each has its delimited subject matter and each makes various necessary assumptions which it, quite properly, does not pause to examine. Philosophy, in contrast, surveys the "horizontal" interrelation of all these fields of inquiry and of all the resultant bodies of knowledge; it also accepts as its special task the "vertical" scrutiny of all the assumptions of all the special disciplines and of the nature and criteria of all human knowledge and evaluation.

This characterization of philosophy in terms of its greater scope is useful despite the fact that the "horizontal" boundaries of the specialized disciplines are by no means rigidly established, each discipline tending increasingly as it advances to overlap with certain other disciplines. The growing interpenetration of physics and chemistry, chemistry and biology, biology and psychology, psychology and sociology indicates that these disciplines are concerned not with radically different realities but rather with different aspects of the same all-embracing reality, and that the chief generic types of experience are in fact interrelated phases of a single all-embracing human experience.

(3) The "vertical" scope of philosophy can also be described as an *orientation* to "ultimates," if "ultimate" is defined not as an unconditioned Absolute, but as the limit of man's most penetrating insight at any given point in his cultural evolution. To be oriented to ultimates is to ask the most probing questions which the human mind can devise, however controversial the best available answers to these questions may be. The philosopher is forever in search of the most profound understanding of the physical world, of human history, of art and beauty, and of the goal of religious aspiration.

I have used the term "ultimate" in order to avoid the suggestion that philosophy can ever achieve absolute knowledge or absolute

certainty. Reality itself can properly be said to be absolutely what it is, and its innermost and irreducible essence might be referred to as the Absolute with a capital *A*. Since the philosopher is continuously trying to discover what reality is in itself, he is in this sense searching for the Absolute. But unless we believe, as some philosophers do, in the possibility of indubitable human insights into the nature of this Absolute, we must insist on the partiality and fallibility of all human knowledge, and we must brand any claim to complete adequacy or certainty of comprehension as the fallacy of "misplaced absoluteness." This fallacy is incurred in all dogmatism, whether secular or religious; hence such dogmatism is fundamentally unphilosophical. Philosophy should strive for more and more penetrating insights into the nature of reality, but with the full realization that any attainable ultimate is still humanly finite and fallible and therefore not to be identified with an inerrant knowledge of the absolute nature of reality itself.

(4) The relation of philosophy to the other disciplines can also be described by saying that the distinctive *method* of philosophy is "dialectical," that is, simultaneously inductive and deductive in its relation to the other disciplines. The philosopher generalizes from the inductive findings of his more specialized colleagues and, simultaneously, explores deductively the implications of his basic principles of interpretation for each of their more specialized fields.

Philosophy is, I believe, necessarily inductive in that it is obliged to take seriously into account our ever growing and ever changing body of empirical information regarding ourselves, our human experiences, and our total environment. This statement involves the assumption that philosophy has no distinctive subject-matter of its own which it alone seeks to investigate, and that every type of human experience and every aspect of reality available to human exploration are already being studied, or can in principle be studied, at closer range and in greater empirical detail by one or more of the specialized disciplines. This assumption would be challenged by certain philosophers and therefore requires a word of explanation.

Every discipline, including philosophy, has its distinctive approach, problems, and basic concepts. If "subject-matter" is defined to signify these, philosophy, like the other disciplines, does of course have a "subject-matter" of its own. But if "subject-matter"

is defined to mean an aspect or area of our total environment, or a type of generic human experience, we must, I think, say that philosophy has no "subject-matter" which is not also the concern of one or more of the specialized disciplines. The philosopher is interested in the physical world, but so are the natural scientists; in art and beauty, but so are the critics of art and literature; in human history, but so is the historian; in the Absolute, but so is the theologian. The perspective of these specialists is more limited than that of the philosopher, but he and they are concerned with the same reality and the same human experiences. Philosophy differs from the other disciplines not in possessing a unique subject-matter, but merely in approaching all aspects of reality and types of experience in a distinctively synoptic manner.

This approach gives the philosopher a certain advantage over his more specialized colleagues, but this advantage is balanced by certain limitations. In metaphorical terms, he views the plain of human endeavor from the aerial perspective of the mountaintop, but from this vantage point he cannot study at short range the trees and fields, cities and houses, in all their detail. He will not, as philosopher, indulge in first hand scientific experiment or sociological survey or literary criticism; he must depend upon the findings of his more empirically oriented co-workers, as they, in turn should rely on his help for a more inclusive and more ultimate interpretation of their methods and conclusions.

Such philosophical interpretation should, in turn, have its deductive repercussions in each of the empirical disciplines. Just as, within each of these disciplines, the "upward" or inductive movement of thought from particulars to wider and wider generalization is balanced by the "downward" or deductive movement from abstract generalizations or hypotheses to their observational implications, so too does philosophical dialectic involve a two-way movement—the "upward" inductive movement from the several empirical disciplines into the realm of maximum philosophical generality, and the "downward" deductive movement from basic philosophical principles to their implications in the several empirical realms. Thus, it is the physicists, not the philosophers, who discover new truths regarding the physical world, but it is the philosopher who is best qualified to discuss the presuppositions of physics and the ways in which the truths of physics can best be related to the truths

issuing from man's other empirical inquiries. These philosophical analyses and assessments should be of great interest and value to the physicist who would like to see his own enterprise in a wider setting.

This account of the relation of philosophy to the empirical disciplines is not meant to imply that only professional philosophers philosophize. Actually, the boldest and most profound thinkers in all the empirical realms must themselves be more or less philosophically oriented and skilled. The philosopher who would shrewdly interpret the presuppositions, methods and conclusions of empirical research must, in turn, be able to understand such research, and this understanding is greatly aided by some first hand experience in the several fields and particularly by a capacity for imaginative projection and assimilation. We must recognize, however, that the effective passage from one level of inquiry to another is becoming increasingly difficult because of the growing complexity of philosophical interpretation and of the several fields of empirical knowledge. This partly explains the tendency of empirical specialists to be somewhat naïve philosophically, and of professional philosophers either to specialize in some branch of philosophy, such as logic or aesthetics, to the partial neglect of other branches of philosophy and of the ultimate philosophical task, or else to attempt a metaphysical synthesis without adequate empirical orientation in one or more crucial directions. This lack of philosophical sophistication in empirical circles, and this lack of empirical rootage or proper balance in philosophical circles, are as deplorable as they are understandable, but a practical remedy is not easy to find. It must be sought, I believe, in closer cooperation between professional philosophers and the experts in the several major fields of empirical research, since no man can hope in our day to emulate the synoptic achievement of Plato or Aristotle, St. Thomas or Hegel.

The account here given of philosophy, or of the philosophical component or dimension of human knowledge, is based on an extension of the Kantian dictum that concepts without percepts are empty, percepts without concepts, blind. I am assuming, in short, that reason cannot spin a knowledge of reality out of itself by sole reliance upon logical non-contradiction, and that primary experiences, whatever their quality and intensity, can never in and of themselves constitute knowledge. *All* knowledge is the product of rational interpretation of empirical evidence. This is equally true

of the more richly empirical reaches of knowledge and of the most abstract philosophical generalizations. To understand and evaluate any particular experience involves putting it in a wider empirical context; to understand any empirical discipline involves relating it to other empirical disciplines in a still wider philosophical context. In this sense it is meaningful to say that all knowledge is ultimately philosophical. But no philosophical generalization has any meaning save in relation to generic types of experience explored by the several specialized disciplines, and these generic types of experience and these empirical disciplines, in turn, mean nothing apart from the particular experiences which exemplify the genus, or apart from the specific observations on which all specialized knowledge must be based. Hence all knowledge, including the most universal philosophical insights, must be inductively rooted; a philosophy which is not finally anchored in primary human experiences is empty, meaningless verbiage.

Two conclusions follow from this conception of philosophy. The first is that a philosophy will itself be provincial in scope if its interpretation of "experience" is narrow, and will be truly synoptic only if it bases itself broadly on *all* the generic types of human experience without initial prejudice. Much contemporary philosophy must, it seems to me, be described as provincial because it so dogmatically rejects man's value experiences, and particularly his religious experiences, as being, by definition, unproductive of significant contacts with, and clues to, the existence and nature of the objectively real—in short, because it limits itself so exclusively, for its empirical anchorage, to man's sensory experiences. This, surely, is the opposite counterpart of a mystical type of provincialism which exhibits a corresponding prejudice against sensory evidence of a physical world and which bases itself exclusively upon certain mystical experiences. Both types of philosophy are one-sided for the same reason, namely, the unjustifiable repudiation of a whole area of human experience which may well be rich in empirical clues to the nature of the real.

The second conclusion follows from the inductive aspect of philosophical reflection. No philosophical interpretations of reality and human experience can be absolutely certain or rationally demonstrable beyond all possible doubt. In their own way, philosophical conclusions must be as tentative and hypothetical as are

the conclusions of the empirical disciplines upon which philosophy must lean so heavily. Like them, philosophy is an on-going concern, a continual re-examination of evidence and an ever-renewed interpretation of reality in the light of all available human experience. A philosopher dare not even assume that his most basic concepts and procedures are final and absolute. Philosophy affords no omniscient encounter with Reality, no privileged access to Absolute Truth. Such authority as it has derives entirely from its distinctive perspective, scope and orientation and method, and this authority carries with it the limitations of a distant, embracing view. It lacks the wealth of empirical particularity and the capacity for concrete experiment and verification of the empirical disciplines. Its authority is therefore not superior to theirs but complements theirs.

This conception of philosophy and its relation to the other disciplines will be disputed by some contemporary philosophers of differing persuasions. Some place greater reliance on pure philosophical reason and believe that the philosopher can arrive at some significant truths which are absolutely final and indubitable. These "rationalists" would claim for philosophy an authority greater and more absolute than I would claim. Others, who might be labeled "physical empiricists," base themselves exclusively on the physical sciences and sense perception and deny that value experiences are revelatory. Still others would validate man's moral and aesthetic insights but would on principle regard all religious beliefs as invalid, insisting that the convictions characteristic of a "high" religion are no more credible than are the crudest superstitions of a primitive religion. These might be called "anti-religious humanists." Finally, there are many philosophers today who either repudiate or ignore metaphysical interpretations of reality as a whole and whose sole concern is highly specialized research in logic or semantics. In what follows, I shall use the term "philosophy" to signify the type of philosophy I have described, recognizing that the "rationalists," the "physical empiricists," the "anti-religious humanists," and the anti-metaphysical logicians and semanticists will all disagree in varying degrees and often for very different reasons.

III. The Nature of Religion

The critical study of the complex phenomenon "religion" does not, of course, fall outside the domain of philosophy. A comprehen-

sive philosophy will concern itself with all types of human experience and all claims to valid insight, and religion is not only a fact in human experience but, in addition, it makes claims of which philosophy must take serious account. Men of religion have always claimed that religion is, or involves, distinctive encounter with, and a response to, a real Being or beings conceived of as not only dynamic and active, but as the source of whatever quality and meaning human existence can have. They have also claimed that their belief in this "saving" divine power, thus encountered, is a valid, not an erroneous, belief. This is a claim which a conscientious philosopher dare not ignore. He must first try to understand the experience in question and then seek to interpret and assess the alleged validity of the associated beliefs.

This generic religious experience is found to possess, in all its historical exemplifications, three basic components which can conveniently be designated by the terms "creed," "cult," and "conduct." These terms signify, for the individual, the beliefs which he himself holds, the religious acts which he performs, and his religiously motivated attitudes and actions towards his fellow men. The same components reappear in every institutionalized religion. The credal component is a more or less articulated body of traditional beliefs regarding the Deity or deities worshipped. In primitive religions these beliefs are normally expressed in story and myth; in a developed religion they are also formulated and interpreted systematically in a theology. As a cult, a religion prescribes various acts of public and private worship, involving the use of symbolism and ritual established under the disciplinary sanction of a continuing institution which, in Christianity, is the Church. Every historical religion has also prescribed various social attitudes and patterns of moral conduct which are felt to be consonant with its beliefs.

Though each of these components is integral to a religion and is always present in some form and to some degree, the act of worship is, from the religious point of view, the most basic. For religion, even the most primitive, is first and foremost man's attempt to relate himself, in what he believes to be the most appropriate and effective way, to what he conceives to be an objectively real Deity or actually existing deities, and this relationship is what the generic term "worship" signifies. Such worship cannot be wholly divorced from some belief, however vague and inarticulate, in the objective

reality of the Being or beings worshipped; it is psychologically impossible to "worship" what is believed to be merely a phantom of one's own imagination, or a mere social ideal. It is also psychologically necessary that the worshipper believe that the Deity or deities he worships be at least partially knowable; it is impossible to worship a wholly unknown and unknowable deity. No religion, therefore, can exist without a credal component. Such belief, in turn, whatever its specific content, invariably has certain implications regarding human nature and man's resultant obligations to his fellow men. It is true that some religions have become so stereotyped and religiously sterile that the moral implications of their professed beliefs have been largely ignored or forgotten, but this is not the case in any religion, primitive or advanced, which possesses religious vitality. The heart and center of this vitality, meanwhile, is the act of religious communion with what is judged to be the divine. It is this communion, interpreted as a real encounter, that constitutes the religious experiences in which the emergent beliefs are rooted and by reference to which they are tested and verified, modified or abandoned, and it is from this communion that the worshipper ultimately derives his sense of obligation to act in a manner pleasing to the divine and his motivation to make every effort so to act. In this crucial sense, cult, in the triad of creed, cult, and conduct, is *primus inter pares.*

The religions of mankind differ enormously, however, in respect to all three of these essential components—in content of belief, in institutionalized tradition and ritual, and in prescribed moral attitude and behavior. We cannot here review these differences; we can merely emphasize one differentiation which is crucial to our discussion, that, namely, between what is sometimes referred to as a "high" or "developed" religion and a "low" or "primitive" religion.

A religion can be said to be "low" or "primitive" in proportion as its beliefs are superstitious, its ritualistic practices magical, its basic orientation egocentric and anthropocentric rather than theocentric, its social precepts directed to conventional correctness rather than to inner spiritual righteousness, and its prevailing attitude arbitrarily authoritarian and dogmatic. A religion is "high," in contrast, in proportion as its beliefs are reflective and enlightened, its ritualistic practices expressive of a belief not in magic but in orderly processes, both natural and spiritual, its

orientation theocentric, its moral precepts directed to inner spiritual purity, and its prevailing attitude one of reflective commitment, humility and tolerance. These criteria for the differentiation of "high" and "low" religion will not recommend themselves to those who believe that all religions are equally superstitious, magical, obscurantist and arbitrarily authoritarian. But they are meaningful and useful for those who are able to accept the actuality, or even the possibility, of valid and enlightened religious belief and practice.

Superstition is partly the result of ignorance, but it cannot be identified with mere ignorance; we would hardly call a man superstitious who lacks certain information and acknowledges that lack, nor would we call him superstitious merely because he is mistaken. Superstition is also partly a function of credulity, yet it cannot be equated with a wholehearted acceptance of a belief; we would not call a man superstitious because he firmly believes in an orderly world of nature and in the validity of scientific inquiry. Superstition can better be defined as belief in arbitrariness rather than order, or as belief which is uncritical and dogmatic rather than critical and open-minded. Religious belief is superstitious, then, in proportion as it is a belief in a Deity or deities conceived to function in an arbitrary and irrational manner, and, further, in proportion as this belief is held in a spirit of blind and uncritical credulity. Religious belief in an objective spiritual order, in contrast, or in a Divine Being who is the source of orderly processes and who conforms to them, may be mistaken, as any scientific or philosophical belief may be mistaken, but it should not be branded as superstitious merely on that account. Such a theistic belief may furthermore be held with great conviction without thereby becoming superstitious. It becomes superstitious only when it is regarded as final and indubitable, i.e., when it is divorced from a sense of human finitude and fallibility.

Superstition, so defined, almost inevitably involves a reliance in magic, that is, in the possibility of invoking and controlling irrational spiritual powers or forces by means of procedures which are correspondingly irrational. "Black" magic involves a belief in demonic forces and, normally, the attempt to make use of such forces to bring harm to others; "white" magic involves belief in beneficent forces and is normally used for beneficent purposes. In

both cases the resort to magic involves the performance of essentially arbitrary acts in order to cajole or coerce essentially arbitrary spiritual forces to promote certain desired human ends. A belief in magic and an indulgence in magical practices, so defined, characterize "primitive" or "low" religions, whereas "high" religion condemns all such belief in, and resort to, magic, whether black or white.

A further characteristic of religious primitivism is its egocentric and anthropocentric orientation; the corresponding hall-mark of a "high" religion is its theocentric orientation. By an egocentric orientation is meant a primary desire on the part of the worshipper to use the Deity or deities for his own advantage; by an anthropocentric orientation is meant a corresponding preoccupation with mankind, and the attempt to use the Divine primarily to further human ends and human welfare. A religion is theocentric, in contrast, which ascribes ultimate value to the Deity and which therefore conceives of worship as consisting, first and foremost, in reverent adoration.

This attitude of reverence is frequently misinterpreted by the critics of religion as necessarily implying a sadistic indifference to human welfare and even a mascochistic indifference of the pious worshipper to his own welfare. Such indifference has indeed on occasion characterized theistic belief, but it is certainly completely at variance with "high" religion, e.g. Judaism or Christianity. The conception of God as not only holy and righteous but as a loving Father means that reverence for God constitutes not only man's proper response to the Divine initiative but, in addition, man's own highest felicity; and the Hebraic-Christian exhortation to love our fellow men and to seek to promote their true welfare because we are all equally the children of the same loving Father is a perfectly logical corollary of the Hebraic-Christian conception of the Deity. The two fold commandment, to love God *and* to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, should be a conclusive answer to the oft repeated charge that Judaism and Christianity are essentially committed to an other worldly indifference to human needs or to a self-destructive asceticism.

Yet Judaism and Christianity, like other theistic religions, merit the designation "high" only in proportion as they insist that the sole proper object of religious reverence and ultimate loyalty is God Himself, not mankind, or any of man's self-generated ideals, or

the self with all its egocentric proclivities. Within this theocentric orientation, mankind and the self fall into their proper place in the hierarchy of being and value. All men, however sinful, possess an inalienable God-given value which should elicit respect and love, but not reverence, and each individual, as an immortal God-created soul, is under similar obligation not to make an idol of himself but to respect himself and to promote his own welfare *through* devotion to the welfare of others and ultimate devotion to God.

The moral precepts of a "high" religion are all focused upon inner spiritual righteousness which reflects, so far as possible, the righteousness of God and which expresses itself in just and beneficent human conduct, whereas the emphasis in "primitive" religion is on strict conformity to conventional stereotypes of behavior which have the sanction of traditional orthodoxy. Here the contrast is between "purity of heart" and an undeviating obedience to more and more particularized patterns of individual and social behavior. This emphasis of "high" religion on inner attitude does not, as is sometimes charged, imply an indifference to overt actions and their social consequences. On the contrary, the pragmatic test of the authenticity of inner attitude is asserted to be appropriate overt behavior and a lively concern for the social results of one's actions. What is condemned by "high" religion is the rigidification of specific codes of behavior, the absolutizing of specific actions as being not only always right but as satisfying, in and of themselves, all the requirements of a religiously motivated morality. The more "primitive" a religion, in contrast, the more does it ignore inner attitude and spiritual self-discipline and the more does it emphasize correctness of external behavior and the heinousness of deviation from the prevailing orthodoxy.

It is inevitable that "high" religion, as here described, should be dynamic rather than static, critical rather than dogmatic, and productive of tolerance and humility rather than of intolerance and arrogance, whereas a "primitive" religion will tend to be the precise opposite. Belief in arbitrariness must itself be arbitrary and dogmatic, hostile to criticism and incapable of reflective self-examination and reform. Belief in magic must express itself in a concern for correct procedures, and the more unintelligible and irrational these procedures are, the more must their mechanical correctness be emphasized. Furthermore, since the object of

religious concern is not here conceived of as itself righteous or worthy of man's reverence, man is inevitably tempted to exploit it for his own individual advantage or to elevate an ecclesiastical institution and the ritual prescribed by it to a position of ultimate religious importance. Hence the tendency of "primitive" religion to idolatry, whether the idol be a figure of stone or clay, a priest, a church, a sacred document, a theological system, or a saintly life; hence the claims to infallibility and absolute authority; hence also an inevitable intolerance and bigotry. "High" religion, in contrast, has within itself its own safeguards against all these "perversions" of religion. Its theocentric orientation enables it to recognize and condemn all idolatries as the substitution of humanity and human artifacts for the Deity himself. Its conception of God as alone omniscient and wholly righteous, and of man as intellectually and spiritually finite, enables it to unmask and condemn all human pretensions to infallibility and saintliness. Its belief in a God who, though mysterious, is partly knowable, and who, though transcendent, is also self-revelatory, invites an attitude of reflective commitment and tends to generate a progressively enlightened faith, rooted in an evolving religious experience and capable of increasing theological articulation, yet ever mindful of God's ultimate mystery and man's inescapable limitations. St. Paul's exclamation, "now we *see* through a glass *darkly*" well expresses this middle ground between blank ignorance and smug assurance. We do see, but only through the glass of mortal finitude; we do know, but not with complete clarity or certainty. Such a belief, if sincerely and intelligently held, is well calculated to generate humility and tolerance.

I have taken pains to describe "high" and "primitive" religion in such a way as not to suggest that any historical religion, past or present, is "high" or "primitive" without qualification. Certainly historical Christianity, in its present-day institutional expressions, is not unqualifiedly "high." All religions, as complex historical phenomena, reflect the strengths and the weaknesses of their adherents, and Christianity is no exception. In actual practice Christianity is today by no means devoid of dogmatic intolerance, of superstitious appeals to magic, of idolatries of various sorts, and of concern with ecclesiastical orthodoxy and correctness of prescribed behavior. It is a "high" religion, I would urge, only in proportion as it avoids

these characteristics of primitivism and as it becomes dynamic, reflective, tolerant and mature.

This surely, is not an unreasonable way in which to analyze and assess the religions of mankind. It is in fact the way in which we analyze and assess all other human enterprises. The science we praise is science at its dynamic evolving best, not the stupidity, arrogance or bigotry of those who have called themselves scientists without exemplifying what we conceive to be the true scientific spirit. The democracy we praise is the ideal of democracy which our own and other democracies fall short of in so many respects. In trying to understand and evaluate any complex human enterprise we must be discriminating, recognizing its gradual historical evolution, and judging its present-day achievements and failures by reference to some norm. To identify science with its primitive beginnings and its long record of mistakes would be as stupid as it would be to identify it, as an actual historical phenomenon, with our ideal of scientific objectivity, precision and verification. It is no less stupid to identify religion with its earliest manifestations in history or its present-day primitivisms, or, alternatively, to regard any historical religion as the perfect exemplificatoin of all that a religion can and should be.

In any case, the only type of religion wholly compatible with philosophy at *its* best is "high" religion, or, more accurately, a religion in proportion as it is "high," that is, reflective, tolerant and undogmatic; and, reversely, the only type of philosophy which is compatible with "high" religion is a philosophy which is true to itself in being open minded and undogmatic. High religion and mature philosophy so defined, are equally critical both of religious primitivism and of philosophical anti-religious dogmatism.

IV. Philosophy and Religion—Rivals or Allies?

It is an historical fact that philosophy and religion have again and again complemented one another as allies; they have also repeatedly competed with one another as bitter rivals. They have been able to assist one another because of their complementary differences; they have competed with one another whenever they have generated conflicting beliefs and particularly when either has dogmatically repudiated the potential contributions of the other. It is therefore important to formulate as precisely as possible their

crucial similarities and differences, and to examine somewhat more closely the major sources of mutual hostility and the conditions of friendly cooperation.

Both similarities and differences are briefly indicated in the *Preface:* "Although it ["high" religion] is metaphysical, ethical and humanitarian, it cannot be equated with metaphysics, or ethics, or humanitarianism." This means that whereas philosophy is primarily a process of intellectual inquiry, issuing in a metaphysical interpretation of reality and an ethical analysis of human conduct, religion is primarily "man's quest for communion with an ultimate spiritual reality" and his attempt to live his life oriented to this reality. In short, philosophy is characteristically an intellectual pursuit; religion is first and foremost a distinctive type of experience and way of life.

Philosophy, however, is not merely a method of intellectual inquiry and a conceptual interpretation of reality and human behavior; its various accounts of man and the cosmos themselves suggest, and even dictate, appropriate ways of life. Religion, in turn, is not merely a quest for communion with the divine and a way of life; it is also a body of beliefs, varying from one religion to another, about the cosmos and man's place in it. Hence, philosophy and religion inevitably tend to overlap, both at the level of speculation and at the level of conduct. This overlapping, at both levels, is a source of potential and actual rivalry; but it also provides the opportunity for mutually helpful cooperation.

Particularly in a secular period such as ours, philosophy tends to become a self-sufficient "philosophy of life" and therefore a substitute for religion in its traditional forms. Contemporary philosophy, for instance, has set itself up as a rival to religion in at least three distinguishable ways: by deriving a system of ethics from a metaphysic, and a way of life from this system of ethics; by conceiving of ethics as an autonomous discipline, independent of metaphysics but prescriptive of moral conduct; and by transforming itself into a humanitarianism in making human welfare its highest good and in regarding "scientific method" as the only reliable guide for individual conduct and social reform. Each of these three procedures seems, to its adherents, to provide so satisfactory a "way of life" as to make religion unnecessary.

(1) Metaphysical systems, whether they be "idealistic" or "materialistic," monistic or dualistic, etc., are bound to have certain implications regarding human nature and man's ability to adapt himself to the reality with which he is confronted. These implications, in turn, dictate certain attitudes towards the universe and towards oneself and one's fellows, as well as certain patterns of private life and social behavior. In short, every metaphysic tends to generate a system of ethics and to point to a "way of life" which is conformable to this system. A philosopher who takes his metaphysical thinking seriously will feel bound to develop a system of ethics conformable to it and, furthermore, to attempt to live up to the practical injunctions dictated by this system. Plato and Aristotle, the Stoics and the Epicureans, Lucretius and Spinoza, Kant and Hegel, Josiah Royce and Bertrand Russell, can all be cited as examples of philosophers who have followed this procedure and who have developed "philosophies of life" which can be said to be, though in very different ways, substitutes for religiously oriented ways of life.

(2) There are some philosophers who believe that ethics can and should be a relatively self-contained philosophical discipline which is capable, at least in principle, of being developed into an "exact" or rigorous "science," and, as such, can provide a thoughtful person with reliable guidance for his private life and his social behavior. These philosophers are either uninterested in metaphysical speculation and wholly preoccupied with ethical analysis and its practical applications, or else they regard metaphysics as so incorrigibly "speculative" and controversial that it can never serve as a reliable basis for ethics and therefore for a practical way of life. The British Utilitarians, Bentham, J. S. Mill and Sidgwick, and, more recently, philosophers as various as G. E. Moore and Brand Blanshard, may be cited as variant examples of this position. Their attitude to religion is not necessarily hostile; indeed, it can be sympathetic and friendly. But in their predominant concern with man's secular experiences of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, pleasure and pain, their "philosophies of life" tend to be divorced from any vital religious orientation.

(3) The third philosophical rival to religion might be entitled "reflective humanitarianism." It differs from the position just described in its insistence that ethical analysis is valid and valuable

only in proportion as it does in fact promote human welfare, and, further, in its emphasis on a method of inquiry and verification rather than on any explicit ethical doctrines or standards. It resembles the position of ethical autonomy in its suspicion of traditional metaphysics, though its adherents are usually sympathetic to some type of naturalism. American pragmatism or instrumentalism exemplifies this tendency to make human welfare the object of man's ultimate allegiance, to stress the importance of individual and corporate effort to promote this welfare, to rely on "scientific method" as the only reliable guide to responsible human conduct, and to distrust metaphysical speculation. John Dewey's critical rejection of all traditional religions because of their belief in an "anterior" spiritual Being, and his desire to substitute for religion the "religious" attitude, that is, loyalty to man-made ideals and the cooperative effort to actualize these ideals, indicates the extent to which this program finds itself in opposition to traditional Christianity and to all other world religions. A "humanitarianism" of this type is so predominantly a way of life that it too must be regarded as a secular substitute for religion.

Insofar as the exponents of these three positions are *dogmatically* secular in outlook, the philosophies of life which they advocate will necessarily be irreligious if not anti-religious on any traditional definition of religions. So long as they refuse *a priori* to take man's religious experiences seriously, that is, as possibly constituting "encounters" with an objectively real Deity and therefore as the empirical source of verifiable religious insight, their metaphysical accounts of reality must ignore the God of religious worship, their ethics must lack all religious orientation and motivation, and their ultimate loyalty must be to mankind. I can see no reason, however, why these three philosophical approaches need necessarily be indifferent or hostile to religion, if the philosophers who favor these approaches exemplify the philosophical objectivity which they profess. What is there to prevent a metaphysically minded philosopher from developing a metaphysic which takes the religious experience and its proper claims fully into account? This is precisely what religiously minded metaphysicians, whether non-Christian or Christian, Roman Catholic or Protestant, have done. Why should the attempt to develop a rigorous ethic necessarily ignore whatever is valid and verifiable in Christian ethics? Or why should an instru-

mentalist concern with a fruitful method of inquiry and vigorous social reform designed to promote human welfare necessarily reject whatever in our Hebraic-Christian tradition is experimentally verifiable and in fact productive of human welfare?

Such an open-minded, though critical, approach to religion at its best would undoubtedly dictate significant changes—metaphysical, ethical, and practical—in all three philosophical approaches, if religoin is in fact found to be productive of valid insights and possessed of unique spiritual resources. But the realization that such changes would be required should not dismay a metaphysician whose chief concern is the truth rather than a defense of his particular formulation of it, or a student of ethics who wants his ethical system to be as adequate and useful to mankind as possible, or an instrumentalist who is really concerned with human welfare and unprejudiced experimentation. The obstacle to such a reconciliation of philosophy to religion is always, on the part of philosophy, some type of rationalistic, secular dogmatism which, I must repeat, is essentially unphilosophical.

Religion, meanwhile, must inevitably try to develop a more or less coherent system of beliefs regarding the Deity or deities which are worshipped, and regarding the cosmos and man's relation to it and to the divine. In their more developed forms, religions tend to articulate in great theological detail a full-blown metaphysics and a carefully worked-out system of ethics. In proportion as religion also lapses, as it continually does, into some form of dogmatic and authoritarian primitivism, it is bound to find itself in opposition to science and philosophy at their responsible best, both in doctrine and basic attitude. This primitivism may express itself in an idolatrous or superstitious ritualism in which a religious rite becomes an end in itself, or a magical device, instead of a spiritually helpful vehicle for religious communion. Or it may express itself in the form of ecclesiastical idolatry; here the Church, with all its human limitations, becomes the object of highest veneration or the source of infallible wisdom. These perversions of man's religious quest are of course opposed to the spirit of scientific and philosophical inquiry. Religious authoritarianism may also express itself in a rigid theology and a code of ethics adhered to with dogmatic finality and therefore necessarily hostile to scientific discovery and philosophical criticism.

But it is only such theological and ecclesiastical rigidity, based upon a pretension to infallibility, which is radically opposed to free and honest metaphysical interpretation, ethical analysis, and humane social movements at their secular best, and which is therefore reactionary rather than conservative, dictatorial rather than spiritually assured. "High" religion, as I have described it, is not only not hostile to secular discoveries and philosophical inquiry; it openly welcomes all such discoveries and all responsible destructive and constructive philosophical criticism. It explicitly repudiates obscurantism and superstition, and it disassociates itself from all magic. While recognizing the inability of the human mind to fathom exhaustively the deepest mysteries of reality, both in its spatio-temporal and its spiritual aspects, it none the less accepts the basic reliability of human reason. It therefore never fears responsible philosophical interpretation or scientific discovery. Though it asserts the reality of a Deity who transcends the spatio-temporal order of nature, it does not conceive of this Deity as irrational or arbitrary, either in His own nature or in His manifestation of Himself in nature and in human history. In short, "high" religion, to use the language of theology, is never fearful that any human truths will contradict God's Truth.

Philosophy and religion need not therefore be rivals or hostile to one another; it is only stubborn dogmatism, either secular or religious, which calls for radical opposition. They can, on the other hand, be allies partly because their distinctive emphases complement each other and partly because they inevitably overlap in important respects. Religion is most like philosophy in its credal component, and it is precisely here that it must turn to philosophy for help in achieving theological precision, scope, internal coherence and orientation to secular discovery. Philosophy, in turn, in its quest for the most inclusive knowledge of reality as a whole and in its concern for the wisest and most realistically oriented philosophy of life, dare not ignore the religious claims to a unique type of insight productive of a unique type of spiritual power. It should base itself empirically upon man's religious experiences as well as his secular experiences and be prepared to help men avail themselves of whatever Divine power may be at their disposal in addition to natural forces and human effort.

V. Objections and Replies

There remain to be considered certain difficulties which philosophers and theologians are likely to regard as obstacles to the harmonious cooperation of these two disciplines. Let us examine some of these difficulties and see whether they can be weakened or eliminated by further analysis.

Philosophers are likely to ask three legitimate questions which concern (1) the nature and implications of religious faith, (2) the religious use of myth, and (3) the assumption, necessary to religion, that the Deity is at least as objectively real as is the physical spatio-temporal world.

(1) The insistence of all religions on the importance of faith seems to many philosophers to differentiate religion so completely from philosophy, with its insistence on reason and critical inquiry, that it is impossible for one and the same person to be sincerely religious and at the same time truly philosophical. Contrast, for example, the typically religious utterance of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," with the typically philosophical utterance of Socrates, "The unexamined life is not worth human living." Are not these two attitudes radically incompatible?

Our answer will depend entirely on how "faith" is defined. If by religious faith we mean sheer credulity which rests on no empirical evidence, is wholly irrational and arbitrary, and is literally indubitable, we must conclude that philosophy can have no traffic with such faith and must, indeed, oppose it as being completely obscurantist. We must further admit that religious believers in all the religious traditions have *tended* to conceive of religious faith in this way. In its authoritarian temper, religion has too often been inclined to defend the credibility of its prescribed beliefs by an appeal to an infallible Church or Book rather than by appeal to individual and corporate religious experience which, rationally interpreted, would render these beliefs credible to a reflective person. In its preoccupation with human sinfulness and depravity *vis a vis* God's perfect righteousness and infinite majesty, religion has tended to emphasize the chasm between God and man and to insist on man's inability to fathom the Divine mystery, with the result that faith in Him has been made almost completely irrational and arbitrary. Finally, in its determination to differentiate a "living faith in a living God" from the purely intellectual entertainment of an hypothesis regard-

ing the nature of the real, religion has tended to confuse reflective certitude with complete logical certainty and to regard religious faith as authentic only if its tenets are held to be absolutely indubitable. Philosophical suspicions of religious faith are therefore partly justified.

Yet in proportion as religion is truly "high," i.e., enlightened, it itself repudiates this conception of faith as ardently as does philosophy itself. It would define a mature religious faith as an attitude of assurance in the Deity which is based on reliable but not exhaustive evidence, and on rational reflection but not on incontrovertible demonstration—in short, as a "certitude" or "moral assurance" which can dictate and sustain resolute action but which can never be identified with absolute "certainty" in its strict philosophical sense. So defined, religious faith is not radically different from the faith which is the precondition and the product of scientific inquiry, political action, or moral endeavor, that is, from the faith which all intelligent and well-informed men must have in order to live and function as human beings and as thoughtful inquirers. Such religious faith is a variant, and from the religious point of view the most important variant, of faith as a generic human attitude.

We can clarify this conception of faith by distinguishing between what can be called "initial" faith from "resultant" faith. By "initial" faith is here meant that attitude of trust which is the precondition of any venture, whether intellectual or practical. Such initial faith is essential since, without it, man cannot hope to have the experiences which alone can provide the requisite empirical evidence in the light of which a more and more informed "resultant" faith can develop. For example, the entire scientific enterprise would be impossible without an initial act of faith on the part of scientific investigators that there exists a world of nature to be investigated, that observation and experiment can provide clues to its structure and functioning, and that rational interpretation of such clues will increase rather than diminish scientific comprehension. No friendship or business venture, political experiment or exploration of art is possible save on the basis of a corresponding initial assurance. Initial faith is as necessary for religious as it is for secular pursuits. Without such an initial faith in a Deity who is objectively real and at least in some degree knowable by men, active participation in a religious tradition and the active sharing

of corporate religious experiences is quite impossible, and unless these experiences are thus participated in, there is obviously no way of knowing their quality, their urgency, or their fruits at first hand.

This is what is meant, or should be meant, by religious believers when they accuse their secular opponents of not knowing what they are talking about. The charge, often legitimate, is that such secular skeptics condemn themselves to a second-hand and superficial knowledge of what religious experience actually is because of their refusal, or their inability, to indulge in this initial act of faith precludes the possibility of their actually participating in the crucial religious experiences and therefore knowing them as "agents" rather than merely as external "observers." As mere spectators they apprehend so inadequately what the reflective believer regards as crucial evidence that their skeptical interpretations of this evidence is correspondingly untrustworthy. As a result, they and their religious opponents are literally talking about different things and in a different language. No wonder that communication between them becomes progressively difficult and finally impossible!

Such initial faith, whether secular or religious, is of necessity largely blind, though it is probably never completely blind, for it is at least possible to argue that a completely blind faith, based on no evidence whatever and possessing no initial plausibility, is psychologically impossible. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that initial faith is, at least in most cases, faith of the "second order," that is, faith based not on first-hand experience and reflection but on confidence in the integrity and insight of someone else. Thus, if I am unfamiliar with the writings of some author, I may well be induced to read them on the advice of someone who recommends them to me and whose recommendations I accept as both honest and informed, or if I am wholly ignorant of poetry I will hardly go to the trouble of trying to find out what it is like save on the advice of someone in whom I have great confidence.

Where no such advice is available, the initial faith requisite for a new venture must be even blinder and more hazardous. Its only basis is some actual or fancied similarity between the new venture, as it is rather blindly envisaged, and some other venture already participated in and at least partly understood at first hand.

All arguments from analogy derive whatever cogency they may have from an appeal to similarities of this type. Such is, in fact, my present plea to open-minded and honest religious skeptics. I am saying to them in effect: I fully admit that you cannot at present possess religious faith because you seem not to have had any of the relevant experiences and cannot, therefore, really understand the religious experiences of others. Nor can you at present be thoroughly convinced of the validity or value of such experiences. Your first step, if you are to take it, must indeed be pretty blind—all you have to go on is the conviction, which I hope you do possess, that at least *some* religious believers in *some* religious tradition are neither fools nor knaves, plus the recognition that your present predicament is similar to what my predicament would be if I were as lacking in first-hand scientific knowledge and experience as you are of first-hand religious knowledge and experience. Will you not, therefore, trust at least some professing believers in the long religious tradition of your own culture or of some other culture enough to venture wholeheartedly on that initial act of faith which, as you can surely see, is analogous to the initial act of faith which, were I as skeptical of science as you are of religion, I would have to make in order to get at the evidence and understand the reasoning which alone could convince me at first hand that your scientific method is a valid and reliable method of inquiry and that your scientific conclusions are credible?

"Resultant" faith, as the term implies, signifies the measure of assurance that is progressively achieved through the discovery of relevant evidence and the clarification of interpretive theory. Here again the analogy between science and religion can be helpful. On the basis of an initial act of faith the scientist formulates his first vague hypotheses and then proceeds to test their deducible empirical consequences. Subsequent observations will normally lead to a modification of the original hypotheses, which, in turn, will dictate new observations—and so the process of scientific inquiry proceeds, with the result that the scientist gets greater and greater assurance not only that he is on the right general track but that certain basic concepts and principles of interpretation are reliable. He never achieves, or can hope to achieve, complete certainty because he can never assume that all the possible relevant evidence is in, or that his interpretation of such evidence as is available is the most reason-

able possible interpretation. But as he and his fellow scientists continue their work, generation after generation, in close cooperation, there develops in them all a growing assurance that amounts to "moral certainty" that they are facing in the right direction, that their methods of inquiry are basically sound, and that a steady advance is being made towards an understanding of the regularities of nature. This assurance is further strengthened by technological advance, for man's amazing control of nature, under the guidance of science, would be quite unintelligible save on the assumption that science is indeed on the right track in its dealings with phenomenal existence. Our resultant faith in science and in particular scientific laws and principles thus becomes more and more informed, reflective and mature, and less and less blind; yet it never wholly ceases to be tentative and partial, simply because man never achieves omniscience. In short, man is not omniscient or infallible, and he must therefore be content with a certitude or assurance involving faith. Finitude precludes certainty as completely as infinite wisdom precludes the possibility of or necessity for mere faith. Faith is as characteristic of man as absolute certainty is characteristic of an omniscient Deity.

Now this, I would urge, is the kind of resultant faith that characterizes "high" religion, or religion in proportion as it becomes "high." It rests on evidence which is spiritually relevant—on the experiences of the individual believer and of the countless other believers who, in sum, constitute the "assembly of all the faithful." It also rests on an honest and rigorous theological interpretation of this evidence. It results in greater and greater spiritual maturity and in a more and more informed and ardent religious faith, yet it remains faith to the end, since man is as finite and fallible in his religious search as he is in his scientific inquiries. Yet this faith is what the man of religion lives by, and the longer he lives by it and reflects upon it in the context of his own religious tradition and of other religious traditions, the greater is his reflective assurance or "certitude" that he is on the right track.

Such religious faith, both "initial" and "resultant," is, I submit, not hostile to honest philosophy. On the contrary, it alone makes philosophical sense. So interpreted, Job's confession of faith and Socrates' insistence that critical examination is essential to mature living are not at variance but actually complement each other.

(2) The role of myth in religion opens up a large area which we cannot here hope to explore. I must confine myself to a few basic observations.

First of all, the distinction must be kept in mind between myth in the sense of pure literary fiction and myth in the sense of concretely and imaginatively expressed truth. A mermaid is a purely mythical creation in the first sense, with no objective counterpart in the real world. Plato's myths and the stories of creation in the Book of Genesis, in contrast, can be regarded as myths in the second sense, that is, as poetic, imagistic expressions of truths which could also be expressed in abstract conceptual terms.

Rationalists have always been inclined to regard myths in this second sense as agreeable and pedagogically useful devices for immature minds, but as essentially inferior to abstract philosophical and, in more recent times, scientific statements. It is at least possible to argue, however, that the mythical expression of insights having to do with values and value situations can articulate and communicate such insights more accurately than can abstract conceptual statements, because a myth can better enable us to participate imaginatively and emotionally in the evaluative experiences in question and therefore to apprehend their true meaning and significance.

Such apprehension depends, of course, on not making the crude mistake which is very commonly made, especially in regard to religious myths, of accepting them as true in a literal prosaic sense or, alternatively, as merely the product of fancy and therefore quite untrue. The Protestant Fundamentalist's reading of the stories of creation and the fall in Genesis illustrates the first error, and the religious sceptic's complete rejection of these stories as pure fiction illustrates the second. "High" religion adopts a middle position. It regards these myths not as literally accurate, since the truths which they express are spiritual in character, but as none the less expressing with great clarity and power the religious tenets, here accepted as basic truths, that God as a spiritual Being is the source and ground of the entire phenomenal world in space and time, and that all men are afflicted by a deep-seated idolatrous perversity entitled "original sin."

The term "myth" has a third meaning, allied to the second but not identical with it, which is of prime importance for all religions which assert that God has progressively revealed Himself to man-

kind in history. Both Judaism and Christianity are historically rooted in this sense, in contrast to Hinduism in at least some of its aspects, or to the more philosophical and mystical religion of Plato. Both Judaism and Christianity attach major importance to what they declare to have been God's successive appearances to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to the long line of major and minor prophets; the Christian would add that God has revealed Himself to men in Jesus Christ in a unique manner, and that He has continued to disclose Himself to His followers during the succeeding centuries. The reports of these events, as recorded in the Bible, are "myths" in this third sense. Regarded as *merely* historical records, they are incomplete and often in conflict with one another, somewhat in the way in which Plato's account of Socrates' life and sayings is far from being a wholly accurate biography or a stenographic report of what Socrates actually said. Yet the Gospels convey, it is reasonable to believe, a spiritually reliable report of the character of Jesus and of the main burden of his teachings, and they are reliable records of the events in question with respect to their spiritual significance. Their historical reliability, in this spiritual sense, is of prime importance to Judaism and Christianity. There is, for example, for the Christian, all the difference in the world between a fictitious Jesus who is merely the creation of man's literary imagination, however inspired, and the historical Jesus of Nazareth who lived and preached and died on the Cross for our sakes.

Lest the objection be raised that, in its anchorage in historical events, religion shows itself to be hopelessly antithetic to science and philosophy, an analogy in science to this historical anchorage should be briefly mentioned. In general, science is quite indifferent to history, but its concern with cosmic and biological evolution is a marked exception. Here the actual temporal order of events, an order that may well prove to be irreversible and in many respects unique, is of major importance to the scientist who wishes to learn how our particular universe evolved in time and when the main stage of its temporal evolution actually took place. This is so obvious that examples need not be given. Science is also compelled to recognize the uniqueness of this actual temporal series, though the entire process is conceived of as being obedient to certain abiding natural laws and regularities. It recognizes, for example, the great likelihood that our planet is in some respect unique among the

planets, and that the actual course of biological and human evolution on this planet is similarly distinctive. These familiar scientific beliefs should make more plausible the Christian insistence on a similarly unique set of religious events in human history, and on the importance to religion of the Biblical "mythological" record of these events.

Whatever one's credal response to this claim may be, Judaism and Christianity cannot be understood unless the Biblical record is regarded in this light and unless the appropriateness and validity of this kind of "myth" be admitted. Only on this basis can we then proceed critically, as philosophy quite properly demands that we should proceed, to examine the religious claim that these myths are in this sense true and that these events, so reported and so understood, provide Christian faith with an historical basis for which there is no substitute.

Closely associated with the religious use of myth, in both the second and the third senses, is the insistence, in all forms of theism, and especially in Judaism and Christianity, that the Deity can more adequately, or less inadequately, be apprehended in personal rather than impersonal terms. This, too, is a large and controversial problem to which we cannot here do justice.

We must start with the recognition that, since all human experiences and reflection are dependent, at least in part, upon our finite human faculties of apprehension and our limited human perspective, *all* human knowledge is in this sense and to this degree necessarily anthropomorphic, that is, the kind of knowledge that *men* can achieve. This recognition protects us, at the outset, against the danger of supposing that some types of human knowledge, either the scientific type or the religious type, for example, transcend these actually inescapable human limitations.

We must bear in mind, secondly, that *all* human languages are human artifacts which are only partially satisfactory for the purposes for which they have been invented and for which they are used. It is indeed true that, since the area of human experience most thoroughly explored by man is the area of man's sensuous experience of objects in space and time which invite quantitative apprehension, the languages which have been thus far most adequately developed and which permit of the greatest precision of expression and communication, are the quantitative and descriptive languages

of the mathematical and biological sciences, and of modern technology. Next most adequate for their purposes may well be the languages of literature and the fine arts, and perhaps the languages employed in our practical pursuits. The languages available to us in our moral relations with our fellows and in our corporate political activities are certainly less satisfactory, as is our understanding of ourselves as moral agents and our knowledge of how to cooperate with one another socially and culturally in large groups.

If reality does have the spiritual dimension which religion insists it has it is certainly plausible to suppose that this dimension is the hardest for finite man to know, and that he has thus far made the least satisfactory progress in exploring its nature and in adapting himself to it. It is also surely understandable that the problem of how to devise a language which is as adequate to the task of spiritual comprehension as is the language of science to its task is the most difficult linguistic and semantic problem which man has ever had to confront.

It is in this context, I suggest, that we should consider the insistence of the theist that, for religious purposes, the language of persons and personal relations is superior to the impersonal language appropriate to things and our relation to them. God, he declares, is less inadequately, though certainly not wholly adequately, conceived of as a Person than as a thing or as an impersonal force; and his relations to man are less inadequately described on the analogy of the relation of father and son than on the analogy of the relation of a man to a stone, or of a stone to the law of gravity. This linguistic usage, it must be admitted, does invite the crude anthropomorphism of regarding God as literally a person, that is, of forgetting that such language is properly used not literally but analogically; but this error is avoidable, and it is in fact, avoided by religion at its enlightened best. Such use of personal language in theology has also the merit of safeguarding us from what is a far worse error, at least from the Judaic-Christian point of view, that, namely, of identifying God with part or all of nature in all its impersonality. The cautious theologian, meanwhile, will use the language of personal relations with great circumspection, careful not to fall into crass anthropomorphic literalism. He will, for example, take pains to describe God's nature in terms of those Divine attributes by virtue of which He infinitely tran-

scends humanity in righteousness, power, and knowledge, and to qualify God's "love" for man in such a way as not wholly to identify his love with purely human love. He may even prefer to conceive of God not as a Person but as that Being (note the resort here to impersonal language!) whose nature it is to be the source and ground of all human personality and the objective condition of all human growth.

Our conclusion, then is that religion is quite justified in accepting myth as poetic truth and as historical occurrence, and in using the language of personal relations, provided it does so with intelligence and caution, fully aware of the dangers and limitations of such usage. At the very least, this procedure does not automatically invalidate religious beliefs expressed in these ways.

(3) The third philosophical objection referred to raises a problem which is even more controversial in contemporary philosophical circles than are the problems just dealt with. Both naturalists and instrumentalists today are very insistent that our universe is in itself neutral with respect to all values, aesthetic and moral values no less than religious, and this insistence must, of course, preclude the very possibility of talking religion seriously in any of its traditional forms. If nothing is in itself beautiful or ugly, right or wrong, good or bad, holy or profane; if everything depends upon human interest and man's creation of ideal standards and objectives; in short, if the ultimate basis of all evaluation is human need, desire, interest, and wish, it is indeed hard to see how religion can be taken seriously save in the radically transformed sense in which John Dewey regards what he calls the "religious" attitude.

Since this subjectivistic position with regard to all values has been criticized repeatedly by competent philosophers without much success in convincing naturalists and instrumentalists, I despair of saying anything further on the subject that is at all likely to be persuasive to them. All I will attempt to do is to point out one common misunderstanding which has certainly contributed to the confusion which now prevails.

It is often supposed that those who believe in objective values must necessarily believe that their own evaluation of them is final and definitive, and that any reference to Beauty, Goodness or God, capitalized and accepted as absolutes, implies that at least some human interpretations of them are as absolute as they are in them-

selves. This supposition has, alas, been encouraged by authoritarian dogmatists, both secular and religious; indeed, these dogmatists have so frequently countenanced this belief, that subjectivistic philosophers can perhaps hardly be blamed for thinking that all believers in objective values are equally smug and dogmatic regarding their own evaluations of them.

There is an alternative position, however, which those who are sceptical of objective values should at least seriously consider. This position asserts that objective values are indeed the objects of man's progressive evaluative search; that all progress in this search is real discovery and not pure human creation or invention; *but* that all human evaluations are relative to human culture and personal temperament and are as finite and fallible as are man's judgments regarding physical fact or historical occurrence. This position, in short, carefully avoids what we have called the "fallacy of misplaced absoluteness" by asserting that, whereas Beauty, Goodness and God are absolutely what they are, human understanding of them is finite, inadequate and relative.

Once again, the analogy to science suggests itself, and may be of value to the naturalist. The latter would normally admit that "nature" is absolutely what it is and not the mere product of human interests, desires, needs, and wishes, but that no scientific understanding of nature has ever been, or ever will be, final, definitive and infallible. Nature would thus be regarded as the continuing object of man's scientific inquiry, remaining what it is with a character of its own, whereas man's knowledge of it evolves, though never to the point of infallible omniscience.

No more than this, be it noted, is claimed by "high" religion for man's knowledge of God as holy and righteous. It is not claimed that man can know God completely, or that man's knowledge of Him is not culturally and temperamentally conditioned. It is claimed, however, that He is actually encountered in religious experience and in certain crucial historical events; that the evolution of a "high" religion like Christianity from its primitive superstitious beginnings to its highest stage of enlightenment is a record of progressive, if somewhat uneven, discovery; and that what is now believed to be known and understood of His nature is genuine and reliable, though certainly inadequate, partial, and fallible.

The man of religion must add that the objective reality of God in all His holiness and righteousness is really essential to the vitality of his religious faith. Without this assurance, prayer becomes impossible, as do all forms of communion and worship and such experiences and concepts as those of sin, forgiveness, and redemption lose all meaning. Here, then we are indeed confronted with a crucial issue which demands of us an either/or decision and a basic act of faith. I am *not* here arguing that the religious conviction on this score is "of course" or self-evidently correct; far from it! But I would urge that the opposing view is no more self-evident or inevitable. Both beliefs deserve sympathetic exploration and critical scrutiny.

Certain theologians may, in their turn, raise the following objections to my account of "high" religion and its relation to philosophy. They may ask (1) whether I have not denied the legitimate authority of Church and Scripture, (2) whether I have not arrogantly set man's judgment above God's, (3) whether I have not undermined vital religious assurance, and (4) whether I have not ignored the way in which the philosopher himself, in his ultimate concerns, may fairly be called religious. Let us briefly examine each of these charges.

(1) The first objection hinges on the definition of the word "legitimate." I have, it is true, rejected as "primitivistic" the belief that any institution or document or person is divinely inspired in the sense that any pronouncements issuing from such a source and with such sanction is infallible and "above" critical evaluation. Such authority I must call arbitrary and therefore philosophically unwarranted. This does not, however, involve the denial of Revelation or authentic inspiration or spiritual authority. It does not deny that God has indeed revealed Himself to man, or that certain historical events are of special spiritual import, or that the historical Jesus was in fact the Incarnation of the Deity, or that His Church is the special vehicle of spiritual insight and power. Nor would I deny the impressive spiritual authority of the Bible, as a uniquely revealing document, or of the Christian tradition as the funded wisdom of centuries of Christian experience and reflection—a wisdom far greater and more profound than the wisdom of any individual, however spiritually gifted and devout. All that is here insisted is that, whereas God himself is what He is, and his actual Revelation

of himself to man, in whatever form, is what it is, man's comprehension of His nature and of His Self-revelation to man is inescapably fallible, and that therefore all authoritarian dogmatism with regard to any belief or interpretation is wholly unjustified, not only in a critically philosophical but also in a devoutly religious perspective. To deny this is, I sincerely believe, to be guilty of the sin of intellectual and spiritual pride.

(2) But, the theologian may retort, does this not involve setting our own fallible human judgment above the judgment of the Almighty? My answer is, emphatically No! God Himself, as the object of our search and our worship, is the absolute standard of all truth and righteousness. All apprehensions of him must be judged by reference to their relative adequacy or inadequacy to his own nature. It is not we who judge God; it is God who judges us.

The crucial problem, of course, concerns the criterion whereby conflicting interpretations of the Deity are to be assessed. In one way or another, the authoritarian position claims that certain accounts of the Deity are divinely inspired in so unique a manner that they are indubitable and not subject, as are all strictly human judgments, to rational criticism. This is supported by the claim that certain human individuals have, on certain occasions, been so used by the Deity as the vehicles for his Self-Revelation that their human finitude has, on these occasions, been inoperative—the claim, in short, that certain individuals have, at certain times, spoken infallibly. Authoritarians would insist that acceptance of this claim is part of the "initial" faith requisite for authentic religious experience and understanding.

It is, in the nature of the case, as impossible to prove that this claim is invalid as it is to prove that it is valid. No one can prove that God has not in fact operated upon certain men in this way. The trouble is that no one can prove that he has so operated. Even more serious, however, is the question as to whether an acceptance of this claim is in fact necessary to religious experience at its best, and further, whether it promotes the spiritual humility which believers are commanded by all "high" religions to exemplify. I can only record my own "liberal" conviction that such belief in the infallibility of *any* pronouncement is not necessary to religious faith, and that it almost inevitably produces spiritual pride, dogmatism, and intolerance. The rich and vital faith of those who

repudiate this doctrine of infallibility shows, I believe, that its acceptance is not a *sine qua non* of "high" religion; and the long history of religious persecutions which have issued from the claim of infallibility provides impressive evidence that the claim is in fact productive not of humility but of pride.

(3) At this point authoritarians may insist that the denial of religious infallibility must rob the believer of that religious assurance in the Diety which is essential to wholehearted religious faith and dedication. This raises the same issue in another way. Must faith in God be rooted in absolute certainty in the strict philosophical definition of that term, i.e., as signifying the utter inconceivability of the opposite? My answer to this question must also be an emphatic, No! Indeed, it seems very clear to me that a mature faith differs from a childish faith precisely in its ability to rise above man's natural but immature craving for absolute certainty. A child's state and sense of insecurity necessarily produce in it a hunger for absolute assurance, but a mature adult can and should be able to face the fact of human finitude and of the precariousness of *all* human belief with courage and even zest. He can and should prefer reflective assurance or "certitude" to unreflective and necessarily dogmatic "certainty," and he should be able to live by such assurance and, if need be, suffer and die for it.

In any case, this is, so far as I can see, the only type of religious faith which is consistent with a wholehearted allegiance to philosophy at its best, and it is only this type of faith which I, for one, believe to be consonant with religion in its highest development. It is in this spirit, and only in this spirit, that I am able to "subscribe" to the theistic position briefly outlined in the *Preface*. My acceptance of this position is not a profession of certainty or an inflexible adherence to a set of infallible dogmas which no philosophy dare challenge and to which I, as a philosopher, must blindly conform. The statement expresses beliefs to which I wholeheartedly subscribe, both as a professing Christian and as a reflective philosopher, but I hold these beliefs with full realization of human finitude, of the partiality of all human insight, and of the possibility and desirability of future clarification or modification. I do not fear such revisions of belief; rather I hope for them, and I am confident that on-going philosophy, as well as on-going religious experience and interpretation, will contribute to them.

(4) Nothing is more likely to infuriate some philosophers than to be told that philosophy, regarded as a serious human enterprise, is itself an expression of man's religious aspirations, and that every philosopher is, at least in his ultimate concerns, religiously oriented. Yet it is hard to avoid this conclusion if religion is broadly and basically defined as man's perennial attempt to probe into reality as deeply as possible, to root himself in this reality as completely as possible, and to adapt himself to it as realistically and vitally as he can.

Philosophical analysis can, it is true, be conducted as a kind of intellectual game, more or less divorced from mankind's ultimate concerns. Some benefit can accrue from such an enterprise; definitions can be sharpened, concepts can be clarified, and procedures can be more clearly established. But unless these intellectual tools and operations are eventually put to use by application to man's basic search for reality and truth they will remain, however fascinating, mere rules and counters of an idle and irresponsible pastime.

Even the philosopher who engages in this pastime, however, is also a human being who, whether he likes it or not and whether he acknowledges it or not, is involved in an "existential" situation in which he must make vital decisions. Like all men, he is confronted with the brute facts of life and death, the alternatives of attempting to escape from reality or of facing it and seeking to adopt himself to it, and the choice, conscious or unconscious, between many alternative ways, some far more satisfactory than others, of living his own life. Defining religion, most inclusively, as man's attempt to relate himself to reality through comprehension and response, every human being can be said to be religious in this sense, and that which he is willing most resolutely to affirm and to which he gives his highest loyalty can be called his God. Since no one can fully comprehend the Absolute, or reality in its inmost essence, all men must indeed be said to worship idols, that is, more or less distorted images of that which at least partially eludes our grasp. It is reasonable to believe that some idols are far cruder than others, far worse distortions of reality in its actual inner essence. Yet each man's idol is his best approximation to the true object of human reverence, and each man's ultimate loyalty is his best approximation to an ideally enlightened and purified form of worship.

In this sense, then, even the philosopher who ignores or explicitly

repudiates religion must be described as religious *malgre lui* because, as a human being, he must have concerns that transcend his technical philosophical inquiries. If in his thinking he fails to grapple with the major problems of human existence, his intellectual pursuits remain correspondingly irrelevant to the religious dimension of his own life and the lives of others. If, on the other hand, he does seek to interpret the crucial issues of human existence in his philosophy and finally develops a philosophy which is opposed to religion in any of its traditional orthodox forms, it is still meaningful to assert that, on a wider definition of man's religious quest, even his anti-religious or unreligious philosophy has a religious dimension and relevance.

There remains, of course, the third possibility, that, in his search for all the wisdom available to man, the philosopher will draw upon whatever light and power he and others can discover in the major religious traditions, thereby deepening and enriching his own synoptic interpretation of reality and human destiny. It is obviously this third approach which the foregoing account of a comprehensive philosophy and a "high" religion would favor as most conducive to philosophic wisdom and religious enlightenment. On this approach, the quality of the philosopher's religious perspective will profoundly influence, consciously or unconsciously, his philosophical method and conclusions. The less adequate his religious insights, the less significantly and illuminatingly will they inform his philosophy; the richer and purer his religious experience and beliefs, the profounder and the more incisive will be his interpretation of reality and life.

This swift survey of a few objections raised in the philosophical or the religious camps is not, of course, exhaustive. Many other important questions, relating to the nature of so-called "religious experience" and to specific religious doctrines call for further and painstaking examination. My concern has not been primarily apologetic; I have not attempted to present the evidence in support of religious faith, or to expound the meaning of specific religious beliefs, or to argue for their cogency. I have merely tried to suggest in quite general terms that "high" religion and philosophy, conceived of as distinguishable but related enterprises, are and ought to be complementary and not in conflict or competition. As they have been here described, "high" religion offers men a tradition, a

funded wisdom, a discipline, and, above all, a living community which, in conjunction, make available to him the illumination and the strength which he desperately needs at all times and especially in "times of trouble" such as ours. Even when philosophy generates a secular "way of life" it is no adequate substitute for a living religion which puts man into vital contact with a "living" God. Philosophy, in turn, is man's only safeguard against provincialism, blind credulity and ultimate dogmatism, and religion, even when it is most critical within its own theological framework, cannot of itself provide this philosophical perspective or critique. Religion alone can provide man with authentic religious insight and spiritual power; philosophy alone can enable man to survey *all* his experiences and beliefs, including his most compelling religious experiences and his most inescapable religious convictions, judiciously and wisely in their relation to one another. Each therefore does indeed "gain from close association with the other. The two in conjunction, but neither one by itself, can move with hope toward more effective conquest of the chaos that again and again threatens to engulf human living. That way lies whatever chance we may have for a more human world."

VI. The Academic Responsibilities of Philosophy to Religion

A department of philosophy in a college or university can find many ways of discharging its responsibilities to religion within the framework of scholarly research and instruction. It must do so, of course, in terms of the concrete situation in which it finds itself, taking into account the abilities, interests, and available time of its departmental staff, the personnel and course offerings of allied disciplines, and the character and over-all policy of the institution of which it is a part. Thus the optimum procedure will differ in important aspects in small colleges and large universities, in church affiliated and predominantly secular institutions, etc. It may be helpful, however, to mention a few of the ways in which a philosophy department might demonstrate an active concern for religion under relatively ideal conditions.

(1) It could, in the first place, support or, if necessary, help to establish, a strong department of religion characterized by first-rate scholarly and pedagogical competence. It would do so in the conviction that religion is so vast, complex and distinctive a subject for

scholarly research, and so important a field for undergraduate and graduate study, that it merits full departmental status. One might perhaps argue, in opposition to this proposal, that religion would receive adequate academic recognition if historians did justice to religious movements and motivations, anthropologists and sociologists to the role of religious belief and practice in various societies, psychologists to religion as a complex and recurrent psychological phenomenon, the student of art to various artistic treatments of religious themes, and the philosopher to the content and validity of religious beliefs. All these complementary approaches to religion are not only possible but invaluable; without them, our understanding of religion would indeed be hopelessly provincial. Specific provision, however, should be made for their effective coordination, both scholarly and pedagogical, and such coordination can best be achieved on a campus by an enlightened department of religion. The chief function of such a department, however, is not to synthesize such tangential approaches; it is rather to provide the proper academic vehicle for the directly focussed study which religion, as a distinctive subject, demands as urgently as do other major aspects of human experience. Few people would be willing, for example, to leave the study of history exclusively in the hands of the historians of art, religion, philosophy, science or political institutions; the pattern of human history must be the full-time concern of competent historians associated, academically, in a department dedicated specifically to this embracing and challenging discipline. The need for similar departmental responsibility for other major fields of knowledge is equally clear. Religion invites and requires no less; we can hope to achieve a sympathetic and critical understanding of it in all its complexity and human impact only if it is accorded the same academic privileges that are accorded other major aspects of human life.

An enlightened department of philosophy will realize this. It will be aware that its own proper activities will depend as much upon the informed study of religion as upon the several natural and social sciences and the several humanistic disciplines. For its own sake, therefore, as well as for the sake of religion in its own right, it will do all it can to encourage the establishment and growth of a department of religion comparable in scholarship and teaching to the strongest departments in its institution.

(2) A department of philosophy properly concerned with religion will also try to include on its staff at least one philosopher whose special interest and competence lies in the field of the philosophy of religion, and it will provide him, so far as possible, with at least one undergraduate course in this field and, whenever feasible, additional courses at the graduate level. Such an undergraduate course would normally be focussed upon what is generally distinctive in man's religious experiences, upon what mainly distinguishes major religious traditions from one another, upon the pattern of development from primitive to "high" religion, upon the problem of the validity or invalidity of religious belief, and upon the proper place of religion in the life of the individual and of society. No two teachers will approach these aspects of the subject in the same way, but it is perhaps appropriate to suggest that, in view of the wealth of first rate literature that is available, there is little excuse for too exclusive reliance on text books. It has been my own experience that nothing will dampen the student's interest more effectively than the average text book, whereas nothing will arouse his interest and evoke his respect more effectively than carefully chosen books of the stature of Augustine's *City of God,* Hume's *Dialogues on Natural Religion,* Bergson's *Two Sources of Morality and Religion,* Dewey's *A Common Faith,* Dostoevsky's *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor,* T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets,* or Richard Niebuhr's *The Meaning of Revelation.* If books like these are studied and discussed with imaginative sympathy *and* critical scrutiny, no question can possibly arise as to the academic propriety of such a course or of its value to the individual student. The same type of study, more detailed and technical, is obviously possible and desirable at the graduate level.

(3) The members of a well rounded department of philosophy will also have ample opportunity to discuss religion, in one or another of its various aspects, in other courses normally included in the departmental curriculum; indeed, neglect of the religious factor frequently amounts to professional incompetence. Thus, the history of philosophy cannot ignore with impunity the variant concepts of God in the main philosophic tradition, from Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, through the Middle Ages, to Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel and Whitehead. Similarly, a course in epistemology or metaphysics can hardly be competently synoptic which neglects

various claims to religious insight, whether authoritarian or empirical, intuitive, mystical or speculative; a course on the nature of values and evaluation is bound to be lopsided if it ignores religious values and value judgments; a course in ethics can hardly afford to restrict itself entirely to secular ethical theories; a course in semantics should certainly include a consideration of religious discourse and its meaning; and even a course in logic might well consider the applicability of logical principles and operations to theological analysis and argument. Finally, empirically oriented courses in social and political philosophy, the philosophy of art, and even the philosophy of science can, with complete propriety, concern themselves with religion as and when religious issues properly arise, as, for example, in a consideration of religious among other social institutions, or of works of art with religious subject-matter and content, or of the antipathy, neutrality or sympathy of science to religion.

(4) More important, however, than all these academic expressions of religious concern on the part of professional philosophers is their exemplification, in their own persons, of a sympathetic receptivity to all insights, secular *and* religious alike, coupled with responsible critical analysis and appraisal. It is not necessary that all the members of a department of philosophy be avowedly religious; indeed, it is to their mutual advantage, as well as to the great advantage of their students, that, between them, they represent several basic points of view, religious and secular, naturalistic and humanistic. In our predominantly secular society, however, such representation can normally be achieved only with special effort and careful planning.

Most important of all, since teaching never quite escapes the direct, crucial impact of one human being on another, is the individual philosopher's attitude to religion and the effect of his attitude, as it reveals itself in many ways, upon the attitude and understanding of his students. Here the minimum requirement would seem to be genuine open-mindedness, humility, and tolerance; most to be desired, if the claims of "high" religion have any validity at all, would be a spiritual dedication, an attitude of reflective and critical religious commitment, that reflects a firmly held and enlightened religious perspective. The religious commitments of many philosophers undoubtedly hamper their philosophical

inquiries because these commitments are provincial and dogmatic, but the anti-religious attitudes and commitments of many other philosophers are equally prejudicial to comprehensive and vital philosophical interpretation. The answer is not the avoidance of commitment but rather a commitment, both firm and reflective, which can give direction and meaning to a man's life and to his philosophical interpretations of it. What we professional philosophers are and do and believe, in short, is not irrelevant to our professional activities; on the contrary, our basic attitudes and our personalities and actions will influence our students as profoundly as will our philosophical discourse. We would do well, therefore, to reconsider our own attitudes toward, and treatment of religious issues, not only in order to increase the depth and breadth of our philosophy, but also because of the effect of our attitudes upon our students. This will require of us a great effort to rise over traditional provincialisms and to explore and express the free spirit of man in his search for whatever in the universe evokes and nourishes his freedom. Philosophy can finally accept no challenge less difficult than this, or embark upon a less worthy quest.

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